New Zealand

Personal Computer

Association Inc.

Web address: http://www.computers.org.nz

MegaByte

Come Aong

Bring Your Friends

Help is at Hand

May 2000 **Number 143** Graphics by Maxine McNabb

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Notice Board

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of the New Zealand Personal Computer Association.

PRESENTATIONS

Next Meeting. **May**
To be announced.

June.
Symatic. Norton Utilities

July.
AGM

Inside Megabyte

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Invircible Virus protection update

If you purchase Invircible virus protection from Virus Defence Bureau in 1998 at the NZPCA club meeting at either Hutt or Wellington and would like an update at the reduced price of $34.00, please contact **Jim Henderson on Ph 934-7822.** This is part of a special deal arranged at the time for members. Jim needs a list of those members who purchased Invircible at the special price.

For Hire

The video projector has been repaired and is now available to members. It can handle either SVGA (Computer) or video (VCR or TV) inputs

The committee proposes to hire out the projector to members or organisations when not in use. Charges are :

Members: $25.00 per night or $25.00 per weekend. GST Inclusive.
Organisations: $150.00 per night plus GST.

A $200.00 bond will be required for all hires. Refundable on return of projector.

Hire period to be from 12pm to 12pm the following day. For further info and booking contact the NZPCA office 384 6223 or one of the committee members..

Presidents Report May 2000

We made $1065.45 at the auction. Very well done everybody. I hope everyone is pleased with what they got, I certainly am. All I had to do was to smuggle them into the house without being found out and this time I think I got away with it! If you didn't get what you wanted there is always next year and you can always get rid of the surplus stuff you bought. I hope you had an enjoyable evening, I did.

For the first time I have had success in refilling a colour ink cartridge for my HP deskjet printer. I bought a Calidad Trio Inkjet Refiller kit from the Paper Warehouse which came with two short lengths of aluminium angle for fixing to a door & frame to get the green top off the cartridge. Needed them too, I had to use quite some force to get the cap off. Once off it was dead easy to squeeze the ink into the sponges through the holes in the top of the cartridge. Refitted the cap and held it on with a bit of Insulation tape, put it in the printer and away it went. The refills still are about half full so the kit is quite economic. Recommend it.

John Foster can no longer keep the Hutt group going. His workload is getting too much and we need someone to replace him. John has done great things with the group, arranging very good talks as many people from Wellington have also found out. We are looking for someone to take his place. Some dedicated, enthusiastic, wonderfull person. Does that description fit you??

Similarly we need some equally wonderful person to assist in running the Guznee Street office for one or two hours per week. Let me know if you can help.

We are in the early stages of planning a nostalgia evening at St Pats. Our thoughts are to bring along early computers, ZX81s, Spectrums etc etc as well as early software games, wps etc. It should be fun showing all the newbees what wonderful software there was in those days and how much things have changed. What?... you could only run one program at a time?? Do you remember Jet Set Willy? King Kong, Wordstar? DOS 2.1? Look out that stuff from the cupboard, that stuff you couldn't quite bring yourself to throw away. Now is the time to show it off.

I Love You.... No not another virus warning, if you havn't heard about it by now it's probably too late. I got it, didn't open it but put it through a dissasembler. It's frighteningly easy to change the message from IloveYou to anything else and it's already happening. What protection do you have against this happening again? Does it mean you sholdn't ever open an attachment to an email again? No.. but it means you will have to be more carefull.

The ILY virus gets into someone's machine and emails itself to everyone in the address book. This means that if you get it the file will probably be from someone you know. The only thing to distinguish it from a legitimate file is that there won't be a message, just the attached file. So the rule is, DON"T OPEN AN ATTACHED FILE UNLESS THERE IS A MESSAGE WITH IT OR YOU ARE EXPECTING IT.

Virus writers, (actually ILY is techically a worm), havn't YET worked out how to add a message to email. Though I don't suppose it will take them long to catch on. At best the kind of message they could attach would be something short like 'Try this' or 'This is great' or some other universal message so keep an eye open for this kind of message and beware, and if you have reason to be suspicious check with the source.

Email and it's facilities for sending files has now become an essential part of life. To allow some *?$#@*&^ program writer to inhibit our lives is to give in to the forces of chaos and destruction. So remember keep The Force with you, back up regularly and Email, Attach, Open etc to your hearts content, and damnation to those who need to cause destruction to support their egos.

That's better, got that off my chest – now I will go and open all the attached files to all my email. If you don't hear from me next month you know what's happened! Rog

Thanks to John Blakeley for the photos of the Auction. The full set in colour will be at the Wgtn meeting.

Check the cache

I recently went on holiday, and while I was away I left a PC for a friend (who was looking after our house) to use, for study assignments and email, etc.

It is a nice little PC - dual Pentium EISA mainboard, with 2x4.3GB SCSI drives configured as a striped array (RAID0) controlled by a Mylex raid controller. Even with only 32Mb of RAM, this PC feels quite fast - I think SCSI makes the difference. But I digress :-)

Apparently, after a week or so of use, the PC wouldn't start Windows anymore. When I looked at the problem, I found Windows had barfed all over its own registry - fancy that!

This is not normal Windows behaviour (yeah, right) and I had an inkling that something might happen as the system had been playing up previously. I was certain the problem was either a defective SIMM or a poor SIMM contact.

Removing the SIMMs and cleaning their contacts appeared to fix the problem, but it would return after a few days.

Eventually I removed the whole mainboard, and cleaned and reseated everything. Particularly difficult to remove and reseat was the socketed cache memory, which was normally hidden from view by the mounting bays.

The system has run for a couple of weeks now, without any problems - I am fairly certain now the problem was caused by a poor connection in the socketed cache, especially as the mainboard is fairly old.

When faced with faults like this, especially on older systems, I think that cache sockets are one of the the things worth checking as a matter of course - but take great care if you remove and refit these. It is very easy to damage the cache chip legs - you really need the right tool for the job.

By Robin Hinde

Most computer hobbyists visit a computer shop on an almost daily basis, packing home an ever-growing number of peripherals such as video cards, hard disks, CD-ROM drives and similar equipment that needs to be built into their computer system. The reason for visiting the computer shop is twofold; their main objective is purchasing peripherals of choice, for which most have saved up for a considerable amount of time. Shortly followed by consulting the shop's service technician for the correct installation procedure, thereby further decreasing the chance of mis-installing or wrongly configuring the newly acquired hardware.

These hardware-savvy computer hobbyists can be easily recognised, as they start thinking about doing the next upgrade right after purchasing that new video card and may actually never put their cases back on as that would only slow down a weekly upgrade. They also know all their motherboards' BIOS settings by heart and how each affects performance. Also, don't be surprised if they know every version number of the drivers they install and can write down a minimum of ten serial numbers for the installed third-party software.

Although such hobbyists know what's best for their computer systems, there're a couple of drawbacks to this never-ending upgrade frenzy. First off, whenever these users buy a peripheral, for example a video card, they usually bring it back within 30 days, to exchange, not refund, because the new revision of the video card has 5 ns SDRAM chips instead of 6 ns.
Or, more commonly, they buy a motherboard and bring it back the next day 'cause they want to use Revision X's undocumented jumper settings, which the version they brought home does not support.

And to give you a couple more fine examples, they'll convince the service technician at the shop to pre-test their new CPU, not because they want to know if it works, but because they want
to be sure it runs at some insane over clocked speed. For that they bring their own system, lock themselves in with the technician and debate with him whether they should go with the CPU that runs 801 MHz at default voltage or the one that hits 836 MHz at 1.8 volts.

Also, and this one's a classic, they buy the biggest CPU Cooler they can find, and when the printing on the box reads 'Dual Fans spinning at 6000 RPM', they head back to the store the next day when they find out that the fans actually spin at 5800 RPM.

And the best one yet; they buy the next generation, state-of-the-art CPU or video card, of which the retailer has just one in stock since they are very hard to come by. They pay for it with dad's credit card and bring it back the next day stating that it doesn't work in their system. If the retailer
browses the web that same evening he comes across a little 'hardware' website with 12 people on the statcounter that has just done an 'exclusive' review of that very same product.

Hopefully I've gotten my point across, that these hobbyists are a retailer's nightmare; the constant flow of hardware back and forth puts a considerable amount of stress on the retailer and his service personnel. They have to deal with awkward reasons for exchanging hardware such as perfectly fine, working video cards, unlike defective products which can be sent back to the manufacturer. As a result, they have stacks of opened boxes with products that have been used for a couple of hours each.

Well, for the sake of these retailers as well as the people having to buy these opened boxes the following article covers the basics of how to NOT install newly bought hardware into your system. Please give it a good read and take the advice to heart:

GAMBLING

By Bruce Robb

First I want to show the spreadsheet complete with all details, showing the net result of your endeavors and the money lost or profit made. The selections are the first 3 horses are taken from the Best Bets, the last 3 horses are selected from Newspapers. There are many modes of selection and you can choose from. By breeding, distance, jockeys, weight, barrier draw, or combination of these factors with any others which be relevant.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Cours	H	W	PL	Qi	Tri	Tot Inv	Pla Ret	Qin Ret	Loss	Profit
2	Riccar	2	1st	1st	1st	T		1.15			
3	Fast	4									
4	19-2	1		2n	Q	T		2.85	11.90		
5	Win Res							6.50			
6	$Bets		3	3	3	120	129	Tri Res			
7	4	8									
8	1400	9		3rd		T		214.60			
9	C1	5					$129.00	235.60	247.50		118.50
10											
11											
12	****	**	**	**	**	*** *	*****	*****	******	****	****

This is how your spreadsheet will look when finished. If the results are greater than investments then a profit is the result, if the investments are greater than the results a loss should be shown. Remember the first 3 horses have Win, Place or Quinella bets $1.00 on each horse. The Trifecta uses 6 horses, and the betting is calculated for all combinations by 6*5*4=120. This is 6 horses for the 1st place, 5 horses for the second place and 4 horses for the 3rd place. If you select 4 horses this gives 4*3*2=24 dollars to cover 4 combinations. Note the horizontal row marked Win Res, this is for the winners win dividend and has been fitted there to keep the page width at A4. Now let us see how good the experts are.

The results have been poor. With 40 races, picking 3 horses for the win was 1 win for every 13.5 picks. Picking 3 horses for the places 1 place for every 6.5 picks. Picking 3 horses the quinella, gives 1 quinella for every 16 picks and picking 6 horses gives 1 trifecta in 60 picks. This shows that the selections is very critical to your returns. What is needed is a method to compare a horses performance with other horses in the same race. To analyze 4 or 6 races for each horse would be a major task and very few races would be prepared for selection. Down the left side of the Best Bet races the results of the last 6 races are given.If these results were charted comparison of horses could be obtained. Unfortunately the result does not clarify comparison, in

fact it makes it more difficult. What is needed is a standard Y axis and the graphs should be straight line graphs. The axis problem is fixed by changing the numbers given in Best Bets by dividing them by 100. This gives for 1=.01, 2=.02, 9=.09, every 0=10=.1 and so on. To have straight line graphs they needed to be added together. If the given numbers are, 960145, starting from the right side which is 5/100=.05 is the data to be entered for position 1 on the X axis. 5+4=9/100 = .09 is the data position 2 on the X axis. 5+4+1=10/100=.01 for position 3 X axis. 5+4+1+10=20/100=0.2 for position 4 on the X axis. 5+4+1+10+6=26/100=0.26 for position 5 on the X axis. 5 sets of data per horse is adequate.

Most charting programs will handle 8 horses, but use only 7 and use the last set for a Test, which will be for series 00000=10+10+10+10+10=0.1+0.2+0.3+0.4+0.5, and will fix the Y scale at 0.5, and will keep all graphs comparable with different pages. The Warp 4 charting program is compatible with spreadsheet or wordprocessor or as a stand alone charting program. When the stand alone program is first opened you will be presented with an open window and a data input window waiting to be filled in. Use the method above to fill in the first horizontal line of data, which is that horses Y axis. Then move left and fill in the horses name or abbreviation. The boxers at the top of the screen are for the X axis and can be filled in with R1.....R5, or can be left empty. Start on the next line of numbers, then the horses name. Remembeto leave one line for the test. If there are 7 horses + test, this will go on one page, if there are 15 horses in the race, you will need 3 pages with 5 horses +test on each page. When all data has been completed,save and the data input will disappear and the chart will appear in edit mode, with 8 blocks around it. Go to the mid-bottom block and drag it down to full page with the mouse. Do the same with the right side to full width page. Now go to the Options menu and click on Titles, a sub-menu will appear and click on Main

Title. Fill this in using abbreviations such as:
Hawke Bay (Date) (Race)(Horses No.)(Page), and reduce the characters by abbreviation such as: HB, 22-4, race 8, H 1-6, P1 and save, the Title will appear at the top of the chart. Finally save the whole chart as a file such as: HB8P1.ext. These charts have different forms and can be changed by the click of the mouse button. Use all of these charts to check them. There are 8 charts to choose from, I can have any in 2D or 3D. This method of selection needs some experience to interpret the graphs, so graph plenty of races and check 1st,2nd,3rd win and places until you are confident in using the graphs. There are two ways of reading the graphs, one is which horse has the best record, the other way is to see which horse has improved the best. This information is clearly shown in the graphs. If you have scratchings after the graphs are complete, click on chart, select data input and convert the data into 0.5 to give a horizontal line at top or convert to 0 to give a horizontal at bottom of chart.

This is the last of the series on Gambling, as my son has sent me Linux Red Hat 6.1 and 3 CDROMS and a booklet on to go with it. I have bought a 8.4 Gb drive and next week will start installation. I have delayed the Linux install till the series on Gambling is complete.

Oh Bugger

GEOFF Breach, of Neutral Bay, read with interest an article in this paper on Friday about the Big Bang theory of creation. "It is a little known fact," he says, "that just seconds before the Big Bang, another, much fainter sound was heard. Researchers have determined that the noise sounded a lot like 'Bugger'."

"Windows Shares Worm" Found!

Internet Connection Security for Windows Users

by Steve Gibson, Gibson Research Corporation

At 8:00 AM, Saturday morning, April 1st — this is NOT an April Fools joke — the FBI announced the existence of a self-replicating, i.e. viral worm, that moves from machine to machine across the Internet by exploiting open Windows shares!

Because of the unfortunate timing of this announcement on April 1st, this could be mistaken for an April Fools prank — it is not! Therefore, here is a link to the FBI notice at the National Infrastructure Protection Center (NIPC)
It was bound to happen sooner or later . . . it has happened NOW: Viral code combining a Windows shares scanner with Windows file sharing to locate and copy itself into other Internet-connected Windows machines across the Internet! Because of the vast number of Windows machines with exposed, shared, directories visible to the Internet, this represents a significant new threat.

Fortunately, people who have previously visited the ShieldsUP! site will probably be safe, but millions of machines are still at significant risk. The SANS Institute has dubbed this the "911" worm because shortly before erasing the user's entire hard drive it uses the system's modem to dial 911, producing a large number of "false positive" emergency calls.

Strictly speaking this is a "worm" more than a "virus" since worms propagate and reproduce themselves without any sort of user involvement or action, whereas a virus requires some inadvertent action on the part of the user. This is the second such worm to have been found "in the wild" and, interestingly, this one knows about and deletes its predecessor when encountered. (A jealous worm?) The worm's payload triggers on the 19th of the month, deleting files from crucial Windows system directories. (You want to be very sure that your system is not infected with it at that time!)

It is not a "high tech" worm, since it was written in the Visual Basic Scripting language. But what's sad — and should be frightening — is that the creation of such a serious and quite damaging Internet threat has become so easy for the "script kiddies."

Preventing Propagation and Reproduction:
Are your shields up? If you have not done so already, be certain that your own Windows system is not exposing any open directories to the Internet. And then, most importantly, spread the word to any Internet-connected friends, relatives, and associates who might not have already taken these precautions.

It is more important now than ever, because now we have predatory viruses capable of roaming the Internet and jumping from machine to machine without anyone being aware!
As you know, the ShieldsUP! web site is here to help everyone quickly check their systems for known Windows file sharing vulnerabilities. PLEASE encourage everyone to take advantage of this completely free service so that the spread of this frighteningly potent and highly destructive virus can be stopped quickly!

Detecting the Virus' Presence:
The anti-virus companies have already received virus patterning data from the FBI. Check for updates which recognize the new 911 Virus.

See NZPCA web page for links anti-virus

You can scan your system for the following three HIDDEN directories which the 911 virus is known to create: "chode", "foreskin", and "dickhair". <<sigh>> Yes, the author(s) of this virus are apparently not very mature. Classic "script kiddie" nonsense.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before scanning with the Windows "Find" function, you must be certain that your Windows Explorer is configured to display hidden files and directories: Under the Windows Explorer View/Options menu, select "Show All Files."

If any of the directories listed above are found, delete them immediately!!
I am certain that we have not seen the last of this sort of virus. Please do what you can to educate your friends, relatives, and associates about the dangers of indiscriminate Windows file sharing over the Internet.

They are always welcome to visit the ShieldsUP! web site to test or verify their security and learn more about the risks of careless Internet use.

Thanks for your attention. Spread the word!

New Version Of Navigator

Netscape, the Internet browser at the heart of the Microsoft antitrust trial, has unveiled its newest version of Navigator that includes a new automatic translation feature for Web pages.
The new browser is developed according to an open source platform, which allows users to see the codes of the software, making the browser more flexible to specific needs.
At 5.5 megabytes, the new version of Navigator is "slimmer" than most recent versions, which should make Web pages display faster and runs on computers using Windows, Macintosh and Linux operating systems.
The new browser enables users to take a Web page written in a foreign language and have it translated seconds later into the language of their choice.

NZPCA OFFICE:
75 GHUZNEE STREET
Office Phone 384 6223
or Colin Candy 479 5252

VOLUNTEERS FOUND:
We have two members who have volunteered to re-open the office on Wednesday. Give them your support and make use of the services the office offers.

OFFICE OPENING HOURS:
Mondays 11am until 2pm.
Wednesday 4pm to 6pm.

LINUX:
If you would like to install Linux Geoff Lethbridge (phone 475 7163) is willing to give some help.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE:
Photo Copying: 5 cents per A4 sheet, 10 cents per A3 sheet.
Scanning photographs or text. $1 for two. $2 for more than two.
Library books $4 per month.:
"Mastering the Internet"
"The Internet: No Experience Required."
"The Internet for Dummies".
"Access 97 for Windows for Dummies".
"Internet Slick Tricks"
Training CD Roms: "Word 97" - three disks: Introduction, Intermediate, Advanced. $2 per period at the office, or $4 per disk per week at home.
Library CD-Roms: A great variety of CDs to choose from.
See Hugh Roberton at the monthly meetings.
Diskettes: 3M 1.44 Mb now available at $9 per packet, $1 per each. The old 5" diskettes also available.

OTHER NEEDS:
If you are in the vicinity and need to use a phone or use a toilet or just want a rest for a few moments pop in.

Holiday in Thailand

Recently while on holiday in Thailand I spent a very pleasant day shoppingat Pantip Plaza in Bangkok.

Pantip Plaza is the main PC shopping complex in Thailand, and while it is not as big as similar plazas in Singapore (for example), its 5 floors packed with hundreds of small shops and stalls have a lot to offer.

Prices in general are slightly better than NZ prices, but not sufficiently soas to justify warranty hassles and the like - but what is amazing is the wide range of products available there, and some items that are not available in NZ at all are very reasonably priced.

For example, translucent mid tower cases were about NZ$100, and very stylish good quality coloured steel cases were around NZ$60.

I didn't buy much - I'm not really into flash cases and new gear, but I did buy a cordless pen and tablet. NZ$180 got me an Acecat Flair, which is very much cheaper than anything similar available in NZ.

Even better - I bought the tablet because it had OS/2 drivers, and although the manufacturer doesn't support Linux (XFree86 really) somebody else has done the work for them, so the tablet has been supported in Xwindow for some months. The manufacturer won't even have their own drivers for Win2000 available until mid-year!

The range of software available at Pantip Plaza was vast, and Linux featured in most stalls and shops. Strangely enough, pricing was the same for Linux software as for just about anything else...

If you are planning to pass through Bangkok, a visit to Pantip Plaza is well worth while - even if you don't buy much. It is easy walking distance from the
Skyrail. And if you can't bear to be without email or Internet access, in
Thailand that won't be a problem as there are Internet cafes everywhere - besides, checking your hotmail will give you a break from the temples and food halls.

Hard drive failure

By Robin Hinde

Whew!

I'm sure that all NZPCA members are careful and sensible enough to keep backups of all their important data (including configuration data and those articles for Megabyte that Arthur so desperately needs!) but these days - with hard drives being so large, it is very difficult to back up everything.

When did you last backup your partition table?

I had a very unpleasant experience a couple of months ago, when I ran a hard drive benchmarking program (HDDSpeed) on my main PC. The system refused to boot afterwards - in fact the entire 6.4Gb disk appeared as blank space. Although I had a reasonable backup of my really important data I must admit that I didn't feel particularly happy when this happened. Personal computers are personal, and they tend to mutate to suit the user over a period of use,as software is installed and settings are changed. My systems are very personal - nobody else can figure where anything is!

Many PCs will only have one partition - usually this is a big FAT32 partition that occupies the entire drive. This usually appears to most users a their C: drive. Subsequent (logical) partitions (if configured) will appear as D:, E:, etc

There are considerable advantages in splitting a large drive into several partitions, as this makes it possible to keep your important data on its own partition (where being separate from the operating system, it is usually safer and easier to back up) and also permits the installation (and reinstallation with minimal disruption) of several different operating systems on the same PC.

Perhaps having about a dozen partitions (as I have) is a little excessive, but I have found it very useful, although handling drive letters up to K: can be a little awkward - but no problems in Linux, which doesn't use drive letters anyway.

The benchmark program had deleted the Master Boot record. This is an area near the beginning of the drive, which contains some code which tells the PC which partition the PC is to be started from, and the primary partition table, which lists the information necessary to locate the beginning and end of each primary partition on the hard drive. If logical partitions exist on the drive, these are pointed to by an entry in the partition table known as an extended partition - this entry replaces one of the available four primary partitions listed in the partition table.

I realised that the benchmark program may only have damaged the partition table, and would not necessarily have damaged the contents of the disk itself. When viewing the drive with a disk editor, I could see there was data on the drive - it was just inaccessible.

I needed to rebuild the partition table, but how? And how was I going to find and recover all twelve partitions?

The first thing I did was - nothing. I left everything as it was - after all, the data was safe enough where it was, so I used another PC to do some research. No need to panic!

One option was to use a disk editor to search the drive for the codes indicating the beginning, end, and partition type of each partition, and build the table manually - quite a daunting task considering I only have 10 fingers and thumbs and I would need to count in hexadecimal. Commercial software is available (from Ontrack, for example) that will enable the recovery of the raw data from a damaged disk so that it can be copied to another disk - but really, all I wanted was my old system back, and I knew there was nothing wrong with the disk itself.

I asked around, and eventually another NZPCA member (see the value of membership?) suggested using a small program called gpart (Guess Partition). This marvelous little piece of beta software is included in the SuSE Linux distribution and a more recent version is available from the web, and of course it is free.

All I had to do was install the software on a working Linux system, install the problem disk as a slave on that system, and let gpart examine the disk and see what it thought the partition table should look like. I did this several times and in different ways, and each time it came up with the same answers, which also agreed with my memory of what the disk had looked like - so with fingers crossed I eventually let it write a new partition table.

With a little more work (reinstalling Boot Manager, and making the disk startable - FDISK / MBR) I had the system up and running exactly as it had been before the disaster.

Now *that* was a good feeling - and Linux and NZPCA contacts had enabled me to recover from a situation that could well have resulted in a reformat and reinstallation of everything.

For detailed information about partition tables and recovery, visit

http://www.datarescue.com/laboratory/partition.htm

SCANNING AND GRAPHICS SOFTWARE

By John Little

Members using our club's scanner at the Ghuznee Street office may have noticed that an alternative to the ULEAD/PhotoImpact software is now available. Some of us found PhotoImpact rather less than user-friendly, so the new application called PhotoStudio is well worth a try.

This article outlines some of the features of PhotoStudio, a 32-bit digital imaging package. PhotoStudio can access Twain-compliant scanners (and digital cameras) to load images directly into the application. It will open and save images in most of the commonly-used file formats e.g. BMP, GIF, JPG, PCX, and TIF. There is a complete set of photo editing and retouching tools like air brush, bucket fill, paint brush and others. Additionally there are masking features to apply operations and effects to specific areas.

When you first start the program you are presented with the main application window, with floating toolbar and palette windows. Open an image using File | Open and you'll see that information about the image is shown in the status panels at the bottom of the main application window, including the view scale, resolution and colour depth of the image. If you move the mouse pointer over the tool icons in the toolbar, you'll see the name and function of each tool is briefly explained in the status panels.

Select a tool by single-clicking on it. Double-clicking will produce a dialog box giving any options for that particular tool. From the descriptions it is obvious what most of the tools do. The Clone tool is useful for removing objects that you don't want in a photo - you select the tool, right-click in an area close to the part you want to erase, then paint over the feature. Careful application of the Smudge tool afterwards will smooth over any cracks in the retouching.

The Magic Wand tool is designed to automatically select specific areas of an image, according to colour similarity. This makes it easy to select whole objects in a picture - for instance, a person against a dark background, and you can then use the Area Move tool to drag them to a new location, or select Copy and Paste from the Edit menu to transfer them to a new image.

PhotoStudio provides over 40 special effects and enhancements with unlimited levels of modifications and thumbnail previews. As an example, if you have a recent colour photo and you want to give it a more atmospheric feel, you can simulate the look of an old grainy b/w print : First, open the photo, then click on Convert | To 8-bit Grayscale. PhotoStudio will apply the change and produce the result in a new window. Now click on Effects | Fine Art | Film Grain. In the dialog box that appears, drag the Intensity slider to around 20. Click OK and the effect will be applied. If you decide you don't like the results, simply click on Edit | Undo Film Grain.

We need to be careful though, since PhotoStudio's Undo feature is single-level, so you can only undo the last operation. Although this is helped by the fact that many operations produce a new image rather than operating on the original.

Another interesting feature is the Stitch function, something you don't find in many other packages. If you have a sequence of digital camera pictures you've taken as a panorama that require assembly, or a document thats been scanned with a hand scanner and needs merging into a seamless image, the stich feature can make the process quite easy.

An exclusive feature is an Album Manager - an image database that provides easy file searching, drag-and-drop arranging and multiple file retrieving. You can also create a

Continued on page 13.

Kapiti SIG

John Blakeley

Twenty-two of us met on the evening of May 1 to hear a talk by Dean Curlew, proprietor of a computer "superstore". Two members are overseas and three others "regretfully" had other commitments. These totalled 75% of our Kapiti members who would/could be there and represented one of the best gatherings we'd had for some time.

I don't know how much that was due to a reminder I sent to members a few days before the meeting. I pointed out Dean would have to drive at least half an hour each way on State Highway 1 to be with us I suggested that when a speaker went to that trouble over a dangerous stretch of road to be our guest, it was good manners for us to do at least as much to listen tohim.

Dean didn't arrive.

We had a little social get-together instead. These exchanges of experiences and solutions to each other's problems are useful. It is surprising how much knowledge and information is tossed casually into conversation and remembered. And we get to know each other better.

Several speakers at other meetings have been a bit diffident about speaking before a group. I've been wondering if a small amplifier would be useful.
I have speakers (electronic ones, not those with tongues!) and microphones .
. . I was told of a secondhand goods shop with a CD set for sale which had a small PA system built into it. Later, I learnt that had been sold, and that when shops display such items they are snapped up quickly.

Then I began to think about the computer and monitors we store at our meeting room. Some members regularly talk through their computers and the internet to people around the world. The computer we use has a modem.
Could the monitors be fitted with a small speaker (we wouldn't need stereo) each, and perhaps even a microphone too?

That would make our meetings interactive. Not only the listeners could be seated, perhaps looking at a screen, but so could the talker. So much less intimidating than that battery of eyes looking over noses like the sighting aim of a firing squad. And we would all be able to hear what was said.

Can any of the club's electronic wizards give us an opinion on this?

Dean ? I phoned his store the morning after our meeting. A staffer said he was there and was well. So he hadn't had an accident on the way here (the possibility had worried me). I was glad he was well, and forwarded to him the reminder I'd sent our members, saying I regretted I hadn't includedhim in its earlier distribution, but he wouldn't hear from us again.

John Blakeley.

From page 12

slide show with descriptive text and they claim "over 100 transition effects".

The on-line help in PhotoStudio gives comprehensive descriptions of all the application's functions.This is a package that I have found relatively easy to use. I acknowledge the kind consideration of the late Graham Rogers in installing the software for our members' benefit.

COMPUSERVE

Love Bug' Computer Virus Sweeps World

Linnette Horne

VBS.LoveLetter.A

A new virus known as the LoveBug has just arrived. This worm appears to originate from the Manila, Philippines. This worm has widespread distribution and sends itself out to email addresses in the Microsoft Outlook address book and the worm also will spread itself via mIRC and infect files on local and remote drives including files with the extensions vbs, vbe, js, jse, css, wsh, sct, hta, jpg, jpeg, mp3, mp2. It also tries to download a password-stealing-Trojan-horse program from a website.

The new virus originates in an email entitled "I love you" and reading: "kindly check the attached LOVELETTER coming from me." Once the attachment is launched, the virus sends copies of the same email to everybody in the user's address book. It works on the same principle as the Melissa virus, which infected about a million computers and caused $80 million in damage in early 1999, also overwrites picture and music files from local and network drives.

The email can have one of the following subject lines

"ILOVEYOU"
"Susitikim shi vakara kavos puodukui..."
"Joke"

The text reads "kindly check the attached LOVELETTER coming from me.", and the worm is included in the attachment, called "LOVE-LETTER-FOR-YOU.TXT.vbs" or "VeryFunny.vbs".

This worm attempts to send copies of itself through mIRC to the IRC channels and through Outlook to all address book entries.

VBS/LoveLetter.worm also attempts to download and install an executable file called WIN-BUGSFIX.EXE, a password stealing program that will email any cached passwords it finds to the mail address MAILME@SUPER.NET.PH.

GENERAL RULES TO HELP YOU AVOID VIRUSES, WORMS, ETC.

The ILOVEYOU worm seems to be attacking primarily Outlook and Outlook Express users -

Never open an email attachment that does not meet ALL of the following criteria: (as a minimum)

1) You know EXACTLY what it is
2) You are EXPECTING IT
3) You are POSITIVE you know who it is from
4) The sender make a personal reverence to YOU, THEMSELVES and the ATTACHMENT in the SUBJECT of the message.
5) You have the LATEST virus definitions updated in your anti-virus software
6) Even then be leery of .doc, .xls .exe and .vbs attachments. Save them to your HDD then SCAN THEM FIRST before opening.

An anti virus software just released to deal with the Love-Bug virus has been loaded to MegaBaud as KILOVU.ZIP.

FILES UPLOADED FROM COMPUSERVE TO MEGABAUD RECENTLY

HACKWACK.EXE.

Software that monitors all activity on a Computer. Helps prevent unauthorised visitors to PC's. Allows the monitoring of URL's visited, keystrokes, fire wall ports, system and shell activity. Supports Internet Explorer and Netscape. WIN9x/NT

WEBCACH.ZIP

Contains Web Cache Illuminator v3.11. This software will allow the creation of an index of files, that will displays all the files in a cache, it will also display the title given by the Web page creator
It can explore the Cache files with any web browser, list by title or filter unwanted Graphic files from the list.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	May 1 Kapiti meeting	2	3 Hardware Sig Group	4	5	6
7	8 Lower Hutt meeting	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Wgtn meeting	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	**Jun** 1	2	3
4	5 Kapiti meeting	6	7 Hardware Sig Group	8	9	10
11	12 Lower Hutt meeting	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Wgtn meeting	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Make sure that your SIG information is here ...advise Arthur Harris 478-4028

The MegaByte is your magazine and needs articles from you to give it that personal touch. We do like to hear from you and are only to happy to print your contributions. Email editor@nzpca.org.nz

Events Calendar

This is a list of the regular monthly and SIG meetings held in the greater Wellington area. Meetings provide the following facilities—

Download shareware programs from CD-ROMs. Sales of floppy disks and storage boxes. Sales of catalogues of CD-ROMs. Re-inking of printer ribbons service. Solutions to software & hardware problems. Presentations, and discussions on any topic. At some meetings – BBS training.

Kapiti. 1st Monday of the month. Main meeting for Kapiti.. Time: 7:30 pm. Venue: **Masonic Lodge Tararua St , Paraparaumu.** (Off Hineamoa Street)

Lower Hutt. Second Monday of the month. Time: 7.30pm onward. Venue: Moera Community House, Moera.

Wellington. Third Wednesday of the month. Main meeting of the PC Assn. Members starting at 7.00 pm. Visitors welcome from 7.00pm. New members intro session 7 pm. President's address 7:30 pm, Presentation of major software supplier 8:10 pm. AGM each July. Meeting concludes 10 PM. Venue Staff room, St Pat's College, Kilbirnie.

SIGs. Special Interest Groups meet as demand requires.

The BBS office is located at 75 Ghuznee Street, Floor 5, Room 11.

Articles for MegaByte.

Articles for the MegaByte can be either uploaded to Conference 10, on BBS or posted to NZPCA, P.O. Box 6359, Wellington.

If you upload it to Conference 10, please leave a description of the content and who it's from. This way we can give you the credit. The MegaByte is published in the week before the Wgtn meeting and articles need to be in at least 10 days before the Wgtn meeting.

VISIT THE NZPCA OFFICE 75 GHUZNEE STREET (5th Floor Room 11).

OPEN TIMES: Monday. 11am until 2pm . Wednesdays. 4pm to 6pm.

RESOURCES:- Photocopying, Scanning, Training Books, Training CD-Roms. Drop off ribbons for re-inking. Log onto the BBS. Purchase floppy disks and ribbon "black stuff".

Ring Office on Ph 384 6223 to check.

Payment of Subs to be addressed to
The Membership Officier, NZPCA(INC), P O Box 6359, Wellington.

All enquires and correspondence to

NZPCA (INC)
P O Box 6359
Wellington

Return Address

Phone Numbers

BBS Node 1	**385 8434**
BBS Node 2	**385 8432**
Help Desk	**479 9203**
Membership	**478 4028**
NZPCA Office	**384 6223**

Address label here

Quay Computers. Wellington

Thanks for suppling hardware to the Hardware Sig group.